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ABSTRACT

This trainer's guide is intended to assist supervisors of work-based career training projects in helping students learn to update and print mailing lists using a microcomputer system. The guide is one in a series of core curriculum modules that is intended for use in combination on- and off-the-job programs to familiarize youth with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in the workplace. Included in the guide are the following components: project information, a summary of the content and approach of the guide, supervisor's notes, off-the-job tutor's notes, background information, lists of tasks and core skills, an action plan that includes suggested learning activities, supervisor and trainee review sheets, and an assessment form. (MN)

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Youth Training Scheme

CORE EXEMPLAR WORK BASED PROJECT

Updating and printing a mailing list using a microcomputer system

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OTF No:1

PROJECT No: S|11

TYPE Individual

ESF
CORE SKILLS PROJECT
YTS

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ASSESSMENT OF CORE SKILLS

This series of projects contains a number of different formats for recording assessment of core skills. These formats are offered for experimental purposes; none is proven as the 'best' method. All are based on the principle that feedback to trainees is a necessary part of the learning process and that such feedback should include information on core skill development.

Further work is being carried out on the methods of assessing achievement of core skills in work-based learning and of how to log such achievement on a record which trainees can take away from YTS. Some of the results of this work will be included in later MSC/ESF Core Skills Project publications.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT ARE WORK-BASED PROJECTS?

Work-based projects are learning materials which aim to make the most of all the possibilities for developing trainees' skills, knowledge and attitudes in the workplace. They build upon everyday workplace tasks to provide experience of the whole range of YTS learning opportunities.

The projects in this series have been tested with managing agents as part of the YTS Core Project, which is jointly financed by MSC and the European Social Fund. In some cases managing agents will be able to use the projects as they are. In others they will need to be adapted to the circumstances of a particular workplace or to the aims of a particular scheme. Some managing agents will prefer to produce their own projects. For such cases these examples aim to demonstrate some principles of good design in work-based learning materials. These principles are:

To encourage trainees to learn by doing
To make the most of all the experiences which are available to trainees in the workplaces.
To start from a real task which is seen as relevant by all parties involved — trainees, workplace supervisors, trainers and off-the-job tutors.
To help trainees see the relationships between things learnt on- and off-the-job.
To base the assessment of achievement upon trainees' actual performance in tasks.
To look for all the opportunities for learning which arise from a task and, in particular, to help trainees to develop the core skills. These skills, in number, communication, problem-solving and practical activities, are used in a wide variety of tasks and are essential if trainees are to achieve competence in those tasks*. They are the skills — of finding out information, planning how to do things, overcoming difficulties and so on — which help trainees to learn more quickly in new situations, either in the same workplace, in a different one, or in the world outside work.

Such skills are required naturally by the workplace tasks in these projects and, in requiring trainees to go beyond the task itself, the projects deliberately *add* to the range of core skills which are required in an everyday working situation. This is especially important for some of the skills of communication and problem-solving which trainees are often not given the opportunity to exercise in work experience.

These principles can be incorporated in projects for all placements and for trainees of all ability levels. Although the projects in this series follow a common format, there is no single 'best' style. Nor is any special expertise in writing necessary. Good work-based projects can be produced by anyone who is determined to help trainees to exploit all of the potential for learning in work experience.

*A technical manual 'Core Skills in YTS' is currently available from MSC. It is supported by a short introductory leaflet and a practitioner's guide for supervisors. A separate manual is available on computer literacy/information technology.

NOTES ON COMPUTER LITERACY

(1) This Project assumes the trainee has some operational and keyboard skills. For example, it is assumed that the trainee can start up the system, use the keyboard, operate peripheral devices, and load files. It also assumes that there has been previous experience of appropriate software.

(2) It is suggested that many of the operational and file handling skills are best acquired in the context of games and personal software applications, and not learned in isolation from hands-on experience. Experience on as wide a range of hardware and software as possible should be provided, to encourage transferability of these skills.

(3) This and related Projects are intended to be used as a means to consolidate and develop these skills, in applications which are relevant to a wide range of Occupational Training Families.

(4) These Projects are generalised - that is, they are not specific to particular hardware or software. They should, therefore, be interpreted and implemented in relation to the systems available.

PROJECT INFORMATION

SUBJECT CHOICE: "UPDATING AND PRINTING A MAILING LIST USING A MICROCOMPUTER SYSTEM"

This Project was intended to demonstrate the use of computer literacy core skills in a very common and simple application of a text-editing program.

WHERE IT CAN BE USED/COULD BE USED:

This Project has been used as part of the computer literacy element of the programme for trainees from a variety of OTF's. It is probably most relevant for work connected with OTF 1 - Clerical, Administration and Office Services.

STAGE(S) IN TRAINING PROGRAMME THE PROJECT WAS /COULD BE USED:

It has been used at stages varying from 4 weeks to 3 months. It would not be advisable that this Project be used as a basic introduction to microcomputers. It assumes some prior level of skill. (See extra notes)

LINK UP WITH OTHER WORK-BASED PROJECTS:

It could be followed up by a Project on Data Base Management e.g. the Project on "Stock Records". An introductory Project which could be carried out before this one is "Using a Microcomputer System".

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

The Project requires the trainee to have had prior experience of hardware and a demonstration of the software appropriate to this task. However it is a straightforward application and could be completed early in computer literacy training.

ADAPTATIONS/MODIFICATIONS:

The Project is written so that it is not dependent on the use of a particular computer hardware system or a particular text-editing program. It should be able to be modified quite easily to suit any particular hardware/software set up.

USE OF OFF-THE-JOB TUTOR:

This Project could be completed in the workplace, or in an off-the-job situation where there is a microcomputer system. At present, most computer literacy Projects are being supervised by the off-the-job tutors because there are not yet computers available in all workplaces.

SUMMARY

This Project asks the trainee to practise using a microcomputer system to:

- access records in a mailing list file;
- make and verify alterations to records;
- produce and check printed output.
- It requires hardware; mailing list software and an existing data file;
- an alterations list.

SUPERVISOR'S NOTES

To carry out this Project, the trainee should have used a computer system and have seen a demonstration of the Mailing List Program.

Make sure the trainee has access to the appropriate

hardware

software

operator's manual

data file (and backup disk if used)

source data for update run

details of output required:
(part or whole of the mailing list;
appropriate stationery)

a hard copy of the current mailing list.

The list of changes required in the update run should be decided in relation to the trainee's ability and interest, and practical factors.

Check that s/he understands what is required in the Project by asking for an outline of what is to be done.

Be prepared to help in case of difficulties, but allow the opportunity for the trainee to solve problems if s/he can. Encourage use of operator's manuals where appropriate.

Check from the printout that the update and print run has been successfully carried out. If a disk-based system is used, check that a backup copy has been taken.

Check that the finishing section has been carried out.

Discuss with the trainee other applications of the mailing list - e.g. selection of records from a particular geographical region for a promotional mailshot. If appropriate, make arrangements for the trainee to try out ideas.

NAMES

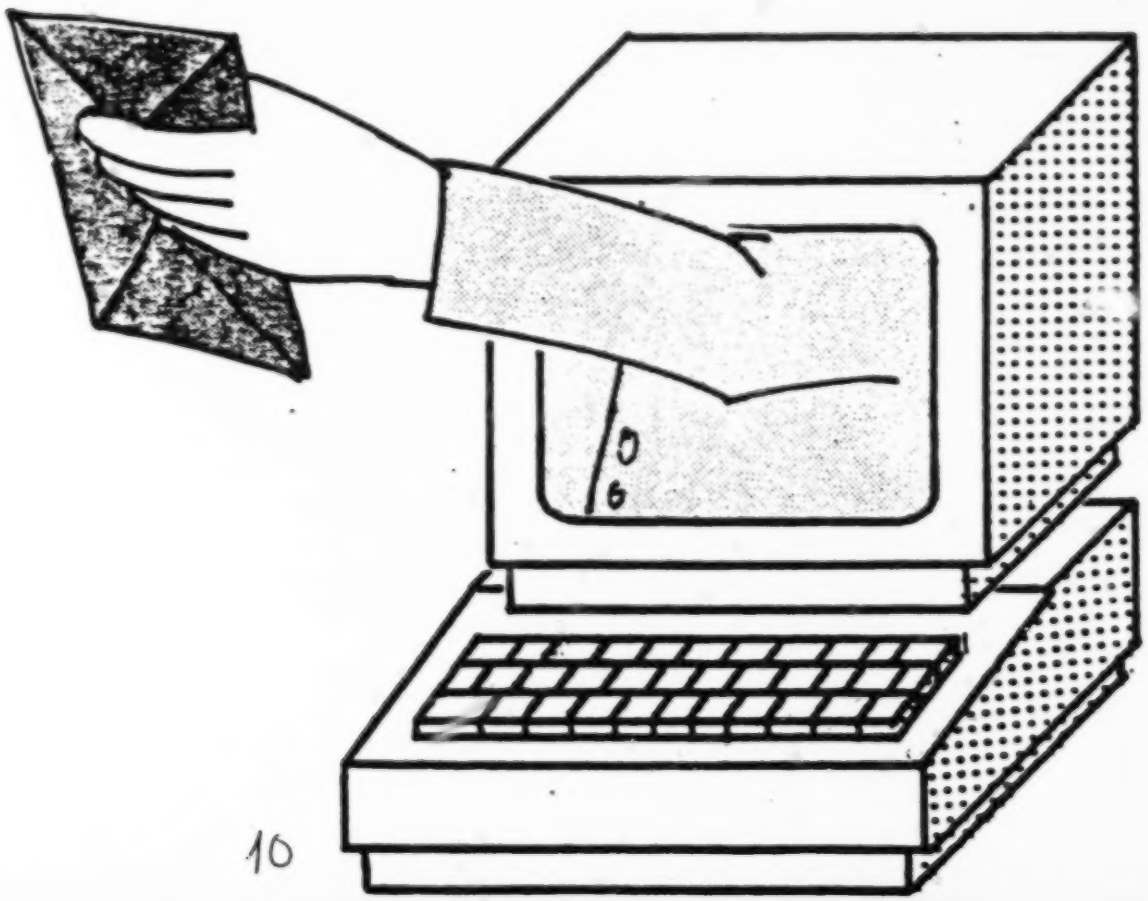
Trainee _____

Supervisor _____

TIMES

Fill in the table below. This will show the time you spend on this Project. The first column has been filled in as an example. Make another table if you need more space.

Date	9/4/84					
Start	9·30					
Finish	12·30					TOTAL
Time Spent	3 hours					



BACKGROUND

Many firms regularly send out mail, such as price lists or magazines, to the same people. To do this they keep a mailing list which is updated when new names and addresses have to be added or when someone changes their address. Depending on what has to be mailed, it may be necessary to print out envelopes or labels.

SITUATION

In the Office.

PURPOSES

Doing this Project will help you to learn more about your work. It will also help you to develop your Core Skills (Number, Communication, Problem Solving, Practical and Computer Literacy Skills). Increasing your competence in these skills will make it easier to learn new work skills, change jobs, and retrain when the need arises.

The activities that you will be asked to carry out are listed below, along with the main Core Skills that they contain. These Core Skills are also listed on the "Project Record " Form at the end of the Action Plan and your Supervisor should assess your achievements in these skills as you complete the Project. This record will be needed to complete your Certificate at the end of your YTS Year.

To help you to:	Core Skills:
set up your work area safely	12.5 arrange for safe and easy working
prepare a microcomputer system for use	12.6 start up a microcomputer system
ensure that the microcomputer is operating in safe conditions	13.1 adopt safe working practices
use a microcomputer in order to alter mailing list records	13.4 operate and control or adjust tools, equipment, machinery or instruments
ensure that the microcomputer equipment is switched off, when finished	14.1 carry out procedures to turn off or hand over: tools, equipment, machinery
check the printout of your updated mailing list records	14.2 check products or results of activity for quality and accuracy
ensure that the equipment is left in a safe condition	14.8 carry out health and safety procedures
discuss your actions and the results with your Supervisor	8.6 discuss with other people in the workplace how things are to be done
use a text-editing programme handle magnetic files	COMPUTER LITERACY

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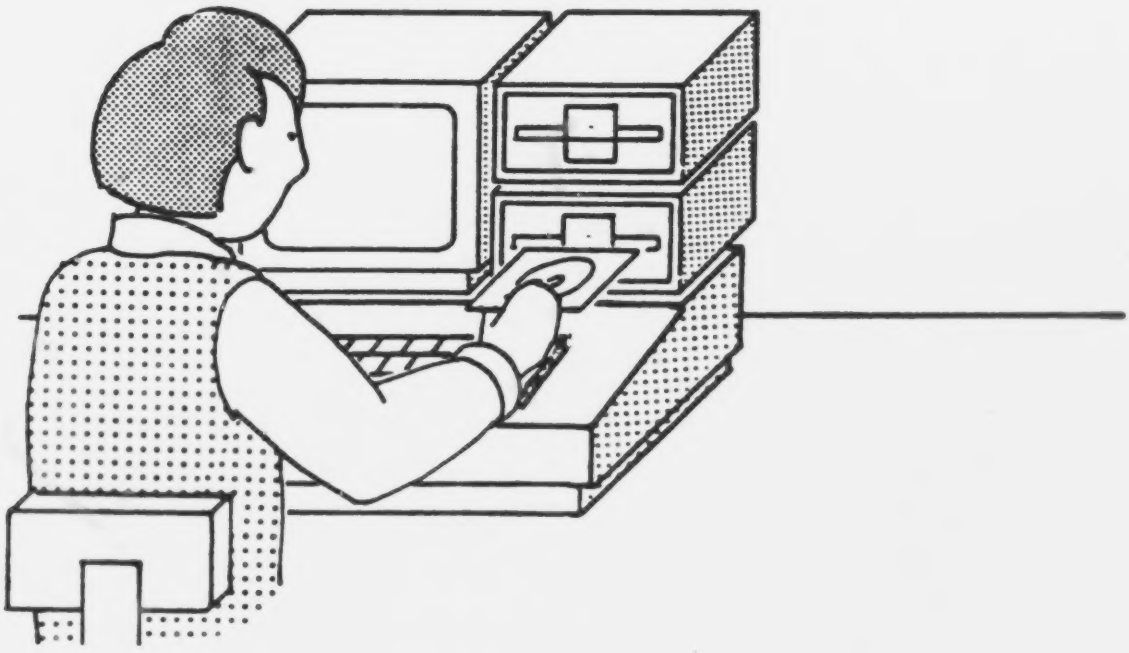
Please read the questions asked in the Trainee Review Section.

ACTION PLAN

Read through this Action Plan carefully before you start.

To carry out this Project, you should already have used a computer system. You should also have seen a demonstration of the program which is used to keep the mailing list up-to-date and to print out envelopes or labels.



Make sure that you know which equipment, magnetic files (program and data), and stationery you are to use.

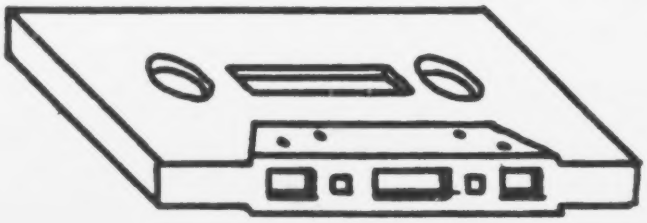
You will need a copy of the current mailing list and the details of changes to be made. Changes could be of 3 types:

- adding a new record
- deleting an old record
- changing a record.

Set up, or check your equipment, making sure that it can be used safely.

Ask your Supervisor if you need help.

UPDATING



Start up your system and give the command to load the program and data files.

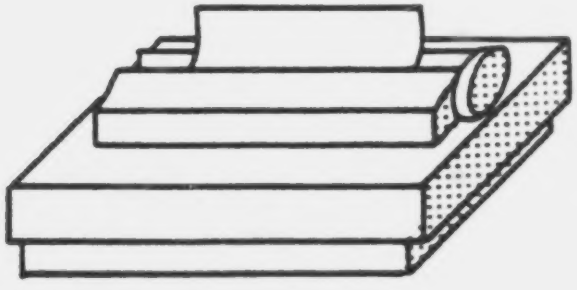
Access the records which need to be altered, and make the changes. (If there are new records to be added, make sure that they are entered in their proper place in the mailing list.)

Check the alterations on screen to make sure that they have been carried out correctly.

The updated records should be saved on the magnetic file. (If a backup copy of the file is normally taken, make the copy by the normal routine.)

PRINTING

Discuss with your Supervisor what printout is required from the mailing list file.



Check that the stationery you need (paper, envelopes, or labels?) is properly inserted in the printer, and that the printout will be properly lined up. (Your program may allow you to make a test print to check this.)

Give the commands to the system to printout the records required. Check the printout for quality and accuracy.

If an updated copy of the mailing list is needed, print it out.

FINISHING 6

Check that:

the equipment is left in a safe condition

magnetic files are returned to the storage place

stationery is replaced in the proper storage place

printed output is properly distributed.

DEVELOPMENT

Can you think of any ways in which you could use the mailing list file, as well as to send out the kind of mail you have just produced printout for? For example, using part of the file to send particular mail to selected addresses.

Discuss your ideas with your Supervisor, and whether it is possible to make arrangements for you to try them out.

Discuss your work on this Project with your Supervisor.

BEFORE YOU START

How long do you think it will take to carry out this Action Plan?

WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED

How long did it take to carry out the Action Plan?

Was this more/less than you estimated?

Why?

TRAINEE REVIEW

These questions may help you to decide what to write.

What did you learn? Remember the PURPOSES or things that you could have learned are listed on Page 3.

Were any parts of the Action Plan too difficult? Which ones? What did you do?

Were any parts too easy? Which ones?

What was the most interesting part of the Action Plan and why?

How could you follow up this Project? Does it connect with other Projects that you have done?

How could you use what you have learned in this Project in the future?

SUPERVISOR REVIEW

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Please refer to Supervisor's Notes.

Please read the questions included under Trainee Review.

Please complete the Project Record Form and discuss your assessment with the trainee before initialling it to show that you both agree with the assessment.

COMMENTS:

PROJECT RECORD FORM

PROJECT TITLE UPDATING AND PRINTING A MAILING LIST USING A MICROCOMPUTER SYSTEM WBP NO S/14 DATE

TRAINEE'S NAME SUPERVISOR'S NAME

WORK BASED PROJECT		NEEDED A LOT OF ASSISTANCE	NEEDED SOME ASSISTANCE	LITTLE OR NO ASSISTANCE		FURTHER TRAINING NEEDED	COMMENTS INCLUDING NO OPPORTUNITY	AGREED INITIALS	
TASK NO	CORE SKILLS ASSESSED			NEEDS MORE PRACTICE	COMPETENT			TRAINEE	SUPERVISOR
	setting up your work area safely 12.5								
	preparing a microcomputer system for use 12.6								
	ensuring that the microcomputer is operating in safe conditions 13.1								
	using a microcomputer in order to alter mailing list records 13.4								
	ensuring that the microcomputer equipment is switched off, when finished 14.1								
	checking the printout of your updated mailing list records 14.2								
	ensuring that the equipment is left in a safe condition 14.8								
	discussing your actions and the results with your supervisor 8.6								
	using a text-editing programme handling magnetic files C.L.								